

Two trees over 200 years old identified in Salem

V Senthil Kumaran,TNN | Jun 19, 2015, 06.36 AM IST



SALEM: A jamun tree more than 250 years old and a 200-year-old fig tree have been identified in Salem district. They were identified during a research study conducted by retired IFS officer V Sundararaju recently. After retiring from the service, he took on the post of president, Society for Conservation of Nature (SOFCON), Trichy.

According to him, he identified the age of the trees based on the aesthetic, botanical, horticultural, ecological, social, cultural and historical values. "The main criteria for considering a tree as heritage tree are its size, form, shape, age, colour and rarity," said Sundararaju.

The largest fig tree is found on the western foothills of Yercaud on the river bank of Sarabanga in Denishpet forest range of Salem district. "Its girth is measured at 7.94m and is 28m in height. The wood is not durable, but is said to last well under water and good for well frames. The figs are edible but are usually found with insects," he said.

The team of researchers also found a jamun tree with a girth of 8.52m and a height of 22m. They found the tree in Kadukkamarathur, a tribal village of Yercaud hills. The researchers calculated its age to be more than 250 years. "There are several jamun trees in Yercaud hills but this tree is the largest of them all. Fortunately, it has managed to escape the axe of wood choppers," he said.

Sundararaju said that both trees could be classified as heritage trees. These kinds of trees are generally large individual trees with unique value which is considered irreplaceable. These trees take decades and centuries to mature.

"We have many interesting trees across the state. But, no systematic study has been undertaken to identify and prepare a catalogue of these giant trees. Besides the study, awareness programmes must be conducted for villagers, school and college students. Committees must be formed to protect these sacred heritage trees," he said.

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/Two-trees-over-200-years-old-identified-in-Salem/articleshow/47728899.cms>